[4th July 1952

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I do not find any necessity to instruct my colleagues who are doing very well as far as I can understand, and even now they refuse on as many occasions as possible and I do not know if I should be, if I may so say, too squeamish about these things."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know, Sir, if the Gorwala Committee Report has gone into the waste-paper basket so far as this State Government is concerned? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Sir, it has not gone into the waste-paper basket; the report is too big in quality as well as in quantity to go into it. There are many good things in it just as there are many things in it which may probably be ignored. The report, I wish to tell the hon. Member, is not a political document and it was originally intended for improving administrative efficiency. Democracy is a little far away from Mr. Gorwala's experience."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know whether in the Gorwala Committee's Report, the Chapter on Integrity applies only to others but not to Ministers? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I do not think I will carry on a debate."

SRI V. CHAKKARAI CHETTY :—" May I know from the Hon. the Chief Minister if he cannot take any other action against any Minister if he is found guilty except that he should resign; does it mean that he should go scotfree and not be subject to any process such as impeachment or trial by a tribunal? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Not at all, Sir. If a Minister or any person is guilty of any offence, he must be subject to some trial suitable for such a case and such type of case."

*Alleged speech of the Finance Minister at Coimbatore re: assignment of lands to political sufferers.*

* 12 *Q.*—SRI S. B. ADITYAN : Will the Hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to state—

(*a*) (1) whether, on or about 1st May 1952, the Hon. the Minister for Finance expressed in his speech at Coimbatore the view that, as regards assignment of lands to political sufferers, it was wrong in principle for a party to favour its followers in this manner; and

(2) whether he announced in the same speech that the question of transferring lands already allotted to well-to-do political sufferers was engaging the attention of the Government; and

(*b*) whether the Government have accepted it as their policy that it was wrong for a party in power to favour its followers by assigning lands, and if so, what concrete action has been taken by the Government to implement this policy?

4th July 1952]

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" (*a*) (1) Yes. The speech was made at a meeting of the Coimbatore Congress Workers to impress upon them the correctness of the present policy of the Government, and was not intended to be a public statement of policy and cannot, I submit, be subject-matter for public discussion.

(2) I am informed that the Finance Minister did not make any such announcement and that what he said was that if well-to-do politicals were willing to part with lands assigned under the previous Ministry's policy to enable Government to give them to poor landless political sufferers, Government would welcome it.

" (*b*) The question is not of favouring the followers of the party in power. What was done before was assignment of land not brought under cultivation to persons who suffered in the struggle for National Independence. The present orders of the Government with regard to these grants of land to political sufferers result as follows :—

No further applications from political sufferers will be entertained. In regard to pending applications, poor politicals will not be worse off than others, in respect of assignments of lands which are not in the possession of any sivayijamadar and which have no special value by reason of proximity to urban areas. Any land in the possession of a previous sivayijamadar will not be touched."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know whether the Hon. the Chief Minister has received any response to the request made to political sufferers to return back to the Government lands assigned to them ? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Some response has been received, but I am not satisfied."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" Has the Chief Minister got any response from Cabinet Ministers who were assigned public lands? Have they returned back the lands to the Government ? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" This, Sir, is an insinuation. If the Hon. Member has got any information in his possession of any Minister having such lands, I would ask him to give a list to me, of course, with a list of opposition leaders' cases also."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" I can say that there is no such opposition leader.

" May I know whether the Government have any proposal to bring in legislation so that the assignments which have been made to Congressmen could be cancelled ? It was mentioned by the Hon. the Chief Minister that assignment once made could not be revoked according to law. If so, is there any proposal to change the law so that these lands could be got back ? "

[4th July 1952

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" It is not so easy; even if we try to change the law whether in the case of a person who has rendered war service or national service and the like, if the terms of the grant had been fulfilled, it would amount to confiscation or compulsory acquisition and we would have to be ready with a scheme of compensation. I think the hon. Member is being carried away by partisanship in this question."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know, if the land is once disposed of, it is given away once and for all? What is the total value of lands involved. I do not want exact figures but to the nearest crore."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" These are all lands which had not been cultivated; there may be mistakes here and there. It will be difficult for me to ask the officers to evaluate them and send me a report for the entire State and to add them up and present them to the House."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" May I know in a rough manner at least whether the value of these lands which have been gifted away to Congressmen exceeds the revenue which is expected to be got by way of the imposition of taxes on bus passengers? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" It is not only the Congressmen and the like that got lands; everyone who claimed to have participated in the struggle for Independence could claim and he was asked to make the claim. Parties on this side and opposite, Congressmen and non-Congress men at the present moment, if they had participated in the Independence movement, had a right to apply and they did apply and I know that many prominent members who are bitterly opposed to the present Government have also taken such assignments. The question now is, they have brought the lands under cultivation and it is a process which involved investment and a lot of trouble and it is not easy to calculate the value at this moment nor is it of any use because no purpose will be served by such a calculation except for purposes of debate in a political discussion."

4-15 p.m. SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" I repudiate the suggestion that any Opposition Leader on this side has got any lands."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" If you repudiate it, may I know whether your brother has received any property under this class."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" As far as I am concerned nothing whatever has been given to me. I have even given away my hereditary lands.

" May I know, whether any steps have been taken to ensure that the lands assigned to Congressmen would not be confiscated and returned to the Government in the event of another party coming to power? "

4th July 1952]

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" The other party will have to consult its Advocate-General " (Laughter.)

Dr. C. NATHAMUNI NAIDU:—" I would like to know from the hon. Member Mr. Adityan, whether he has given away the entire portion of his hereditary land or only a portion of it? "

Sri S. B. ADITYAN:—" I have given away my entire property."

Dr. A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—" May this House be enlightened whether the hon. Deputy Leader, when he was the Chief Whip of the Party in power, advised the then Government not to give any land to political sufferers and supported the view that some of us took, that it was not a good thing to apportion lands to political sufferers of the party concerned."

Sri S. B. ADITYAN:—" This is a question for my personal explanation."

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" It is a question addressed to me. I am poorly informed about the history of the Government of this State, I am sorry. But I presume I have enough information.

" The Opposition Deputy Leader was the Chief Whip. Whether he can now question me about any step that he did not take then, is the question now. Sir, politics is a curious game and men may take any position at any time according to expediency."

Sri S. B. ADITYAN:—" On a matter of personal explanation. I have always stood against it. I opposed it from the very beginning and I never applied for any land."

Sri C. RAJESWARA RAO:—" The Hon. Chief Minister has just now said that all political sufferers who had gone to jails and participated in the National Movement have received lands. May I ask, if he is aware that no member of the Communist Party has applied and got any land as a political sufferer."

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" Sir, according to my understanding of that policy, which I do not approve and which I have cancelled as far as I can, all people who had suffered whether by going to jail or otherwise in the struggle for Independence during the last thirty years were entitled to apply. Many among them, who deserved and who were willing to take over the uncultivated land and to spend money on it, got it. There might have been cases where there were improper requests and improper grants made by error and I do not know what the question is. Am I to classify those who received land assignments under the scheme that is now under discussion? If I have to classify them on the basis of opinions they now hold, it is a difficult matter."

[4th July 1952

SRI S. B. ADITYAN:—" This has developed into a debate. May I ask for a half-hour debate under rule 21 of the Council Rules? "

MR. CHAIRMAN:—" No."

SRI C. RAJESWARA RAO:—" Is the Hon. Chief Minister aware that the lands given to political sufferers are lying idle for the last four years and if those cases are brought to the notice of the Government, may I know what the Hon. Chief Minister proposes to do in the matter? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" I have already said—if correct information is given to the Government—if the conditions of the assignment have been broken—and I presume that one of the conditions is to bring the land under cultivation—I shall be too willing to get the assignment cancelled. But the hon. Member may give me information about his own case also, I hope."

SRI C. RAJESWARA RAO:—" If the Hon. Cheif Minister wants, I can give information. I have got several cases.

" The Hon. the Chief Minister said that lands in the possession of sivayijamadars have not been touched. Sir, there are several cases where the lands belonging to sivayijamadars have been taken away and assigned to political sufferers. If those cases are brought to the notice of the Hon. Chief Minister, may I know what he is going to do in the matter? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" The hon. Member who put the question is making a mistake but I shall answer as far as I can. The previous policy of assignment was to grant, under certain conditions, uncultivated land to certain classes of applicants and it is quite possible that in those cases there might have been previous occupants. As I have said, henceforth the present Government has made strict rules that if any person is in occupation with or without licence, he shall not be dispossessed. That is the present policy. If the assignment has not been completed, this Government has stopped it. If the assignment has been completed, I have already explained the legal position."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN:—" I believe that about 11,000 assignments have been made. What is to happen to the former owners who have been dispossessed? Is any compensation proposed to be given to those who have been displaced in favour of political sufferers? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—" There is no question of compensation to people who had no right to the land. It is a question of policy and of protection and of welfare. There is no question of compensation arising. If the hon. Member proposes any scheme to compensate all the poor people, I shall be glad to serve as one of the trustees."

4th July 1952]

Sri S. B. ADITYAN :—" What the U.D.F. proposes is to take back all those lands squandered away and restore them to the people's Government. I want to know whether compensation will be given to those who had expended money in bringing the land under cultivation and who were asked to give up their lands to political sufferers? "

The Hon Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The premises of the hon. Member are all wrong. There is no question now of dispossessing any person who has either spent money or not spent money. The question is asked, whether we will give compensation to people who have spent money and who have been dispossessed in favour of political sufferers. It is impossible for me to answer this question because it is not the intention to dispossess even a man who has not spent money."

Sri V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Will the Hon. Chief Minister inform the House whether the Government have consulted the Legal Department regarding the validity of these assignments without a law being passed for that purpose? "

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" The question is, whether legal advice was taken before assignments were made. The assignments were made—as the hon. Member is aware—before this Government came to office. Since this question relates to an earlier period, I can answer only from the information I have, viz., that no legal advice was taken. The assignments were made by the Revenue Department to applicants for lands which were not under cultivation and which were available for assignment. There is no question of legal opinion."

Sri V. GURUNANDAN ROW :—" Will the Hon. Chief Minister now consider the advisability of having the matter re-examined as the assignment of lands without passing an appropriate law was invalid and that no compensation need be given? "

The Hon. Sri C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" Probably the hon. Member is referring to a very difficult question, with reference to the land tenure in our country. All these assignments have been made under the laws governing assignments of land in our country from time immemorial. If the hon. Member means to say that we must re-enact laws, bring Bills and pass laws governing holding of lands in our country, it would be nothing short of utter chaos."

Sri S. B. ADITYAN :—"On a point of Order, Sir. The Hon. Chief Minister said that there is no case of a man who, after having spent money on his land, has been dispossessed of his land. I gave one such case when I gave notice of a question recently but the Hon. Chairman has disallowed it."

Mr. CHAIRMAN :—" The reasons were given to the hon. Member as to why it was disallowed."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" This is concerning Periyakulam taluk, Madurai district, where a man who had been in possession of this land for three years and who had spent money on it had been dispossessed of his land. As the Hon. Chief Minister has asked to give instances of such cases, I request the Chair to allow my question. Either the question must be allowed so that the particular case may be examined or the Chief Minister must be prevented from telling a thing which is not correct."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I am sorry, the hon. Leader of the Opposition has curious notions about points of order. This is a curious point of order. As I have already said, it is impossible at the present moment under the present scheme, for any person who has spent money on any piece of land to be dispossessed because the order is very specific and everyone is following it and no assignment will be made where there is any previous occupant, whether he has spent money or otherwise. If the hon. Member is referring to past cases, he must put a separate question. If necessary, he may even write to me. I shall look into the files and tell him, if the Government dispossessed any man without paying compensation. I shall be glad to do it. When was it? Will the hon. Member kindly tell me?"

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" In your Congress Ministry."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" What does the hon. Member mean by saying, ' your Congress Ministry '? Was it before this Government came into office?"

SRI S. B. ADITYAN :—" Two years ago."

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" If it is a case which happened two years ago, I would request the hon. Member—if he wants me to correct anything wrong that had been done—to give me all the facts or write to me about them."

SRI V. CHAKKARAI CHETTY :—" On what grounds does the Hon. the Chief Minister disapprove of the principle of assigning lands to political sufferers?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I understand, the question is, on what ground does this Government disapprove of the policy of assigning lands. The ground is that in this poor country, where any person has already taken possession of uncultivated land without licence and is cultivating it, he does so under stress of necessity and he is subject to extra levies in the course of the year from time to time. My view is—as I am asked to explain the reason in this case—it is not a good thing for any person who really took part in the struggle for national independence to dispossess such persons."

4-30 p.m. SRI M. HARISCHANDRA PRASAD :—" May I suggest to the Government, Sir, that, when assigning lands to political

4th July 1952]

sufferers, they do not interfere with the lands kept for communal purposes, like guntas, tanks, etc., to avoid frictions in the villages?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—"Any acquaintance with the rules on the subject would show that nobody can make or allow such assignments to be made of lands which are used for communal purposes. Such lands cannot be assigned at all. In cases where there is any doubt there is an inquiry held. The Collector assigns only such lands as are not required for communal purposes."

SRI V. CHAKKARAI CHETTY:—"I believe the Hon. Minister did not follow my previous question. Why does he disapprove of the principle of assigning lands to political sufferers and why does the present Ministry not approve the policy of the past Ministry, as distinct from the question whether it is right or wrong to dispossess a person to whom land is assigned and he has spent money on it in improving it?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—"I thought I made it quite clear. A man or a Government disapprove of a thing because in his opinion or in their opinion the thing is wrong. I have already said, I consider it wrong for one who claims to be a patriot, after doing a patriotic service, to ask for a return for such service, especially in the form of grant of land which is in the occupation of another person, who for the sake of maintaining himself has squatted on that land. The circumstances show the stress of poverty of the individual. But while anything wrong or unlicenced should be set right, such poor men should not be deprived of their means of subsistence. I do not disapprove of the policy of grants to men who have done national service but I disapprove of the consequences of that policy. I do not quite understand what the object of the question is. I have answered it as far as I could understand it."

SRI S. B. ADITYAN:—"Does the disapproval go to the extent of getting back the land? Is it disapproval in words or in action also?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—"The disapproval is in words, and as far as law permits in action as well, and as far as I can get influence to bear upon people without the help of law, I shall also try to do it. But I cannot go beyond a certain point. If the hon. Member who puts the question suggests these things for his own purposes and if I followed the hon. Member's opinion even my conduct would be misunderstood." (Laughter.)

*Minimum wages for agricultural labour.*

* 13 *Q.*—SRI T. PURUSHOTHAMA MUDALIAR: Will the Hon. the Minister for Industries and Labour be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have taken any steps to fix minimum wages for agricultural labour; and